

**CLASS I RECALL**  
**HEALTH RISK: HIGH**

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Steven Cohen (202) 720-9113  
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## **COLORADO FIRM RECALLS BEEF TRIM AND GROUND BEEF PRODUCTS FOR POSSIBLE *E. COLI* O157:H7**

WASHINGTON, July 19, 2002 — ConAgra Beef Company, a Greeley, Colo., establishment, is voluntarily recalling approximately 19 million pounds of beef trim and fresh and frozen ground beef products that may be contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced today.

The recall is an expansion of the June 30 voluntary recall of 354,200 pounds of fresh and frozen ground beef products. Today's voluntary action was taken following a scientific and technical review of plant practices and company records by FSIS. The investigation indicated that product destined to become ground beef that was produced at the Greeley plant had a heightened possibility of containing *E. coli* O157:H7.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has documented multiple cases of illness connected to ConAgra beef that was the subject of the June 30 recall.

"Our highest priority is protecting the public's health and safety," said William Hudnall, acting administrator of the Food Safety and Inspection Service. "Today's precautionary action is an additional measure to ensure this priority is carried out.

"Because of the potential of foodborne illness from consumption of meat products contaminated with harmful bacteria such as *E. coli* O157:H7, consumers who have purchased the suspect product are encouraged not to consume it and return it to the place of purchase," Hudnall said.

He added that consumers can be confident that proper cooking kills harmful bacteria. Whether or not consumers find recalled product in their homes, following safe handling tips and cooking ground beef products to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F. will ensure that any harmful bacteria present will be eliminated.

*E. coli* O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacteria that can cause bloody diarrhea and dehydration. The very young, seniors and persons with compromised immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness. Anyone who suspects they may have an illness should contact a physician.

### **PREPARING GROUND BEEF FOR SAFE CONSUMPTION**

Although the product(s) being recalled should be returned to the point of purchase, consumers preparing other ground beef products should heed the following advice.

Consumers should only eat ground beef patties that have been cooked to a safe temperature of 160 °F. When a ground beef patty is cooked to 160 °F throughout, it can be safe and juicy, regardless of color.

The only way to be sure a ground beef patty is cooked to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria is to use an accurate food thermometer.

Color is not a reliable indicator that ground beef patties have been cooked to a temperature high enough to kill harmful bacteria such as *E. coli* O157:H7.

Eating a pink or red ground beef patty without first verifying that the safe temperature of 160 °F has been reached is a significant risk factor for foodborne illness.

Thermometer use to ensure proper cooking temperature is especially important for those who cook or serve ground beef patties to people most at risk for foodborne illness because *E. coli* O157:H7 can lead to serious illness or even death. Those most at risk include young children, seniors, and those with compromised immune systems.

The labels on all products subject to the recall bear the establishment code “EST. 969” inside the USDA seal of inspection.

The following ground beef products subject to the expanded recall were produced on approximately 28 production days from April 12, 2002 to June 29, 2002. Each product bears on its label a pack date from “APR 12” through JUN 29.”

- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck, 80/20 Coarse Grind 8-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42606.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 75/25, Coarse Grind, 8-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42511.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 73/27, Coarse Grind, 8-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42510.”
- “BULK GROUND BEEF, 81/19, FINE.” Each label bears the case code, “2209393.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 73/27, Fine Grind, 8-5# Chubs, Keep Frozen, Net Wt. 40 Lbs.” Each label also bears, “42502.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 81/19, Fine Grind, 8-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42499.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 93/07, Fine Grind, 24-1# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42891.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Round Fine Grind, 12-3# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42878.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Round, 85/15 Coarse Grind, 8-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42609.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck, 80/20 Fine Grind, 8-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42630.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 75/25 Fine Grind, 8-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42632.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 85/15 Coarse Grind, 8-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42409.”
- “CERTIFIED, ANGUS BEEF, Ground Beef, 81/19 Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42242.”
- “Hunt-Wesson, #IB171, 70/30 COARSE GROUND BEEF, FOR FURTHER PROCESSING.” Each label also bears, “42301.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42162.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 81/19 Coarse Grind, 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42141.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 81/19, Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42142.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 85/15, Coarse Grind, 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42151.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 75/25, Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42122.”

- “Con Agra Beef, Beef Trimmings Ground, 73/27, Use In Fully Cooked Only, Keep Frozen, Net Wt. 60 Lbs.” Each label also bears, “42116.”
- 16 ounce packages of “GROUND BEEF ROUND.”
- 16 ounce packages of “GROUND BEEF, 73/27.”
- 16 ounce packages of “GROUND BEEF CHUCK.”
- 16 ounce packages of “GROUND BEEF, 80/20.”
- 16 ounce packages of “LEAN GROUND BEEF, 93/7”
- 16 ounce packages of “Kroger, FRESH, GROUND CHUCK, 100% BEEF.”
- 16 ounce packages of “Kroger, FRESH, GROUND BEEF, 100% BEEF.”
- 16 ounce packages of “GROUND BEEF SIRLOIN.”
- 60-pound boxes of “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 85/15 Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42152.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 81/19, Fine Grind, 24-1# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42841.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 81/19 Fine Grind, 12-3# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42843.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 81/19 Fine Grind, 8-5# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42845.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 81/19, Fine Grind, 12-5# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42846.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 24-1# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42861.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 36-1# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42862.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 12-3# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42863.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 12-3# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42867.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 12-3# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42868.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 8-5# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42869.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Round Fine Grind, 24-1# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42871.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef, 85/15, 60 Lbs. Net Wt.” Each label also bears, “44117.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings 50/50, 60 Lbs. Net Wt.” Each label also bears, “44001.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings 65/35, 60 Lbs. Net Wt.” Each label also bears, “44002.”

- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings 75/25, 60 Lbs. Net Wt.” Each label also bears, “44003.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings 85/15, 60 Lbs. Net Wt.” Each label also bears, “44007.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings 50/50 Keep Frozen Use in Fully Cooked Only, 60 Lbs. Net Wt.” Each label also bears “44016.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings 65/35 Keep Frozen Use in Fully Cooked Only, 60 Lbs. Net Wt.” Each label also bears, “44017.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings 85/15 Keep Frozen Use in Fully Cooked Only, 60 Lbs. Net Wt.” Each label also bears, “44019.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings 80/20 Keep Frozen Use in Fully Cooked Only, 60 Lbs. Net Wt.” Each label also bears, “44020.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Sirloin 90/10 Fine Grind 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42132.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42166.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Chuck Coarse Grind 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42169.”
- “CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF, Ground Beef Chuck Coarse Grind 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42262.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef 93/07 Coarse Grind 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42191.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef 93/07 Fine Grind 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42192.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Round Coarse Grind 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42171.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Round Fine Grind 6-10# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42172.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 73/27, Fine Grind, 24-1# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42811.”
- “Con Agra Beef, 73/27, Fine Grind, 12-3# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42813.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef, 73/27, Fine Grind, 16-3# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42814.”
- “Con Agra Beef, 73/27, Fine Grind, 12-5# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42816.”
- “Con Agra Beef, 73/27, Fine Grind, 24-1# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42817.”
- “Con Agra Beef, 73/27, Fine Grind, 12-3# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42818.”
- “Con Agra Beef, 73/27, Fine Grind, 8-5# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42819.”
- “Con Agra Beef, 75/25, Fine Grind, 8-5# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42825.”

- “Con Agra Beef, 75/25, Fine Grind, 12-5# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42826.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Ground Beef Sirloin Fine Grind, 24-1# Chubs.” Each label also bears, “42831.”
- 80 ounce packages of “GROUND BEEF 75/25”
- 80 ounce packages of “GROUND BEEF 73/27”
- 80 ounce packages of “Kroger FRESH GROUND BEEF QUALITY GUARANTEED 100% BEEF”
- 80 ounce packages “GROUND BEEF 80/20”
- 80 ounce packages of “Kroger FRESH GROUND BEEF QUALITY GUARANTEED 100% BEEF”
- 48 ounce packages of “GROUND BEEF 73/27”
- 48 ounce packages “GROUND BEEF CHUCK”
- 48 ounce packages of “Kroger FRESH GROUND ROUND QUALITY GUARANTEED 100% BEEF”
- 48 ounce packages of “Kroger GROUND CHUCK QUALITY GUARANTEED 100% BEEF”
- 80 ounce packages of “Kroger GROUND CHUCK QUALITY GUARANTEED 100% BEEF”
- 48 ounce packages of “GROUND BEEF 80/20”

Also subject to the recall expansion are the following beef trim products produced on approximately 34 production days from April 12, 2002 through July 11, 2002. Each product bears on its label a pack date from “APR 12” through “JUL 11.”

- “Con Agra Beef, Edible Beef Fat with Visible Lean and Edible Beef Fat, Ingredients: Beef Fat with Visible Lean, Beef Fat. For Further Processing, (Paper Combo).” Each label also bears, “43997.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings, 85/15, (Combo).” Each label bears, “43007.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings, 65/35, (Combo).” Each label also bears, “43002.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings, 50/50, (Combo).” Each label also bears, “43001.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Chuck Trimmings G/B, (Comb).” Each label also bears, “20490.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Chuck Trimmings G/B, (Combo).” Each label also bears, “30490.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Round Trimmings, (Combo).” Each label also bears, “30638.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings, 65/35, (Combo).” Each label also bears, “43002.”
- “Con Agra Beef, Bnls Beef Trimmings, 50/50, (Combo).” Each label also bears, “43001.”

The following products were part of the original recall on June 30, 2002.

- “ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef 75/25 Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs” with the case code "42122";
- "ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef Sirloin 90/10 Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs” with the case code "42132";
- "ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef 81/19 Coarse Grind, 6-10# Chubs" with the case code "42141";
- "ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs" with the case code "42162";
- “ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef Chuck Coarse Grind, 6-10# Chubs” with the case code "42169";
- “ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef Round Coarse Grind, 6-10# Chubs” with the case code "42171";
- "ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef Round Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs" with the case code "42172"; and
- "CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF,” “Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 6-10# Chubs" with the case code "42262."

The cases of ground beef that were initially recalled were marked with a package code “Freeze or sell by 06 18 02,” and each case contained eight ten-pound Chubs, as follows:

- "ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef 81/19 Coarse Grind, 8-10# Chubs" with the case code "42410";
- “ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef 81/19 Fine Grind, 8-10# Chubs” with the case code “42499”; and
- “ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef 73/27 Coarse Grind, 8-10# Chubs” with the case code “42510.”

The ground beef product that was initially recalled was marked with a package code “Freeze or Sell by 06 18 02” and was packaged in cases, with each one contained 12 five-pound Chubs, as follows:

- “ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef 73/27 Fine Grind, 12-5# Chubs” with the case code “42816.” Each retail chub contains the label “GROUND BEEF.”

The ground beef product that was initially recalled was marked with a Julian date code of “151 02” on each case, and each case contained 36 one-pound Chubs, as follows:

- “ConAgra Beef,” “Ground Beef Chuck Fine Grind, 36-1# Chubs” with the case code “42862.” Each frozen retail Chub contains the label “GROUND BEEF CHUCK.”

Consumers and media with questions about the recall may contact Jim Herlihy, vice president of communications and consumer affairs, ConAgra Beef Company, tollfree at (888) 742-0467.

Consumers seeking general information about this recall can also call (866-849-7438), a special tollfree number established by FSIS.

Consumers with other food safety questions can phone the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. The hotline is available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time), Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.

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NOTE: Access news releases and other information at the FSIS web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>

## USDA RECALL CLASSIFICATIONS

**Class I** This is a health hazard situation where there is a reasonable probability that the use of the product will cause serious, adverse health consequences or death.

**Class II** This is a health hazard situation where there is a remote probability of adverse health consequences from the use of the product.

**Class III** This is a situation where the use of the product will not cause adverse health consequences.